United Nations S/2006/418

Security Council

Distr.: General
20 June 2006

Original: English

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Somalia

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to the statement of the President of the Security Council of 31 October 2001 (S/PRST/2001/30), in which the Council requested me to submit reports on a quarterly basis on the situation in Somalia. The report covers developments since my last report of 21 February 2006 (S/2006/122). The main focus of the report is on political developments since the convening of the first extraordinary session of the Transitional Federal Parliament in Baidoa on 26 February 2006 and on the recent upsurge of fighting in Mogadishu. It also provides an update on the security situation and the humanitarian and development activities of United Nations programmes and agencies in Somalia.

II. Situation within the Somali transitional federal institutions and developments inside Somalia

2. The Aden Declaration of 5 January 2006 (S/2006/14; see S/2006/122, paras. 6-10) and the convening of the first extraordinary session of the Transitional Federal Parliament in Baidoa on 26 February 2006, allowed the transitional federal institutions to begin to address some of the key differences that had divided the leadership and paralysed the political process for most of 2005. These included the interim location of the transitional federal institutions pending the restoration of security in Mogadishu and the deployment of an Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)/African Union (AU) peace support mission in Somalia.

3. Differences over the interim location of the transitional federal institutions were resolved on 22 April 2006, when the Transitional Federal Parliament endorsed Baidoa as the interim seat of the Transitional Federal Government and Parliament. The Parliament has established 14 parliamentary committees and is in the process of setting up a national constitutional commission. These developments should allow the Government to proceed with the fulfilment of its obligations under the Transitional Federal Charter.

4. At a meeting on 21 May 2006, held in Baidoa, the Council of Ministers adopted the draft national security and stabilization plan and on 23 May 2006 it submitted the plan to Parliament for consideration. The plan provides for the

06-39731 (E) 050706

deployment of an IGAD/AU peace support mission, the details of which are to be prepared in consultation with IGAD and AU (see para. 25 below).

A. Fighting in Mogadishu

5. While there has been progress in the political process, the security situation, especially in Mogadishu, remains a matter of serious concern. During the reporting period, the capital saw some of the worst fighting for nearly a decade. The conflict pitted militias loyal to the leaders of the Alliance for the Restoration of Peace and Counter-Terrorism (ARPCT) against those belonging to some of the Shariah Courts and their associates. Both sides belong to the Hawiye, the dominant clan in the Mogadishu area.

6. ARPCT was formed officially on 18 February 2006. It comprises Government ministers and powerful businessmen and faction leaders. The stated aim of ARPCT is to uproot terrorist elements reportedly linked to, or protected by, some of the Shariah Courts operating in Mogadishu. At least seven Shariah Courts have been established in the city in the past few years. In the absence of a functioning central or city government, they provide basic security and social services in sections of Mogadishu. While not all of the Shariah Courts have extremist leanings, some have been accused of being responsible for assassinations and terrorist attacks in Mogadishu. They have also been accused of harbouring foreign individuals suspected of terrorist activities.

7. The leaders of the Transitional Federal Government have stated repeatedly that ARPCT has not been acting in Mogadishu on their behalf. President Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed and Prime Minister Ali Mohamed Gedi have maintained that if the leaders of ARPCT, particularly the ministers, were serious about fighting terrorism, they would have to come to Baidoa and work with the Government on that issue. The Government insists that terrorism in Somalia can be addressed effectively only under its umbrella. However, some of the ministers in ARPCT and some of their adversaries in the Shariah Courts do not recognize the authority of the Transitional Federal Government.

8. Fighting erupted in Mogadishu on 22 March 2006 when militia loyal to Abukar Umar Adani attacked militia loyal to Bashir Raghe Shirar in the Galgalato area of north Mogadishu. Adani is believed to be the main financier of the Shariah Courts, while Shirar is a prominent businessman and ARPCT member. The confrontation was seen to be a continuation of the clashes in January 2006 between the same militias for the control of access to the port of El-Ma'an. The fighting began as a commercial dispute within the Abgal sub-clan, to which Adani and Raghe belong, but soon escalated to involve other militias from ARPCT and the Shariah Courts. The fighting lasted for four days, resulting in the death of at least 60 people, most of them civilians. Some Shariah Court leaders disassociated themselves from this fighting, declaring it to be a commercial dispute between Adani and Raghe. Although some of the fighting was for control of areas within the city, much of the conflict took place around airfields and ports, especially the ports through which humanitarian assistance is transported.

9. A second, intermittent, round of clashes between the same two groups continued throughout April 2006, with each side struggling for strategic advantage and neither side achieving substantial success. Meanwhile, in anticipation of further

fighting, fearful civilians began to flee the city. It is estimated that up to 2,000 residents of Mogadishu sought safety across the border in Kenya.

10. A third round of fighting began on 6 May 2006 in north Mogadishu between militia loyal to the Chairman of the Union of Islamic Courts, Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed, and others loyal to Nur Hassan Ali "Nur Diqle", a member of ARPCT. Both leaders belong to the Abgal sub-clan of the Hawiye. The clashes soon spread to other parts of the city and brought in additional militia from both sides. The fighting was the heaviest Mogadishu had seen in years. Both sides used heavy weapons indiscriminately, causing the deaths of at least 160 people and the wounding of 250 others. Most of the casualties were civilians. Hundreds of families fled Mogadishu for neighbouring regions.

11. On 9 May 2006, my Special Representative, François Lonseny Fall, called a meeting in Nairobi of international representatives to discuss the security situation in Mogadishu. All of the representatives expressed serious concern at the scale of the fighting and its possible consequences for the implementation of the Transitional Federal Charter. They stressed the need for a common approach to the challenges in Mogadishu, in particular the terrorist threat, while continuing the search for a peaceful settlement to the violence.

12. My Special Representative issued a press statement on 10 May 2006, calling for an immediate and unconditional ceasefire in Mogadishu. This appeal was reinforced later by the Transitional Federal Parliament, myself, the European Union, the League of Arab States, members of the Security Council and the United States of America.

13. My Special Representative also engaged senior Somali political and traditional leaders, including clan elders who could exercise their moral authority and influence with the leaders of the two parties to the conflict in Mogadishu. On 14 May 2006, members of various civil society groups, including clan elders and other traditional leaders, businessmen and politicians, announced that they had succeeded in convincing the two sides to observe a ceasefire.

14. On 18 May 206, Prime Minister Gedi, at the request of the Transitional Federal Parliament, wrote a letter to five ministers who are also members of ARPCT asking them to come to Baidoa within seven days to resume their ministerial functions. The ministers were Mohamed Qanyare Afrah and Muse Sudi Yallahow, who are the main ARPCT leaders; Omar Finish and Botan Isse Alim, who are based in Mogadishu; and Barre Aden Shire "Hirale", who is based in Kismayo. The letter was written with the approval of President Yusuf. While three of the five ministers were reported to have responded positively and to have indicated their intention to come to Baidoa, Mohamed Qanyare Afrah and Muse Sudi Yallahow did not respond to the Prime Minister's request. The Prime Minister subsequently extended the deadline by another seven days.

15. On 24 May 2006, fighting resumed in the central districts of Mogadishu, causing a large number of casualties and severe dislocation and anguish for residents caught in the crossfire. My Special Representative issued a press statement on 25 May. He reiterated his call for an immediate and unconditional ceasefire and urged all parties to find a solution within the framework of the Transitional Federal Charter. He stressed the need for all Somali leaders to respect basic humanitarian and human rights norms of access to civilians in need and protection for

humanitarian workers. The fighting subsided on 27 May with the Shariah Courts making significant territorial gains, especially in central Mogadishu. At least 60 people were reported killed and some 100 were injured. Many of the casualties, as in earlier rounds of fighting, were civilians. The fighting ended on 2 June with the militias of the Shariah Courts making significant gains. Some ARPCT leaders fled to Jowhar, whereas others were reported to be regrouping in north Mogadishu. On 4 June 2006, the militias of the Shariah Courts were reported to have taken control of Balad, a town on the road to Jowhar.

B. Insecurity in Baidoa

16. Concerns remain about insecurity in Baidoa, the seat of the Transitional Federal Government and Parliament. During much of 2005, Baidoa was the scene of clashes between factions of the former Rahanweyn Resistance Army. With the intervention of Digil-Mirifle elders and politicians, however, the political and security situation in the city improved substantially. On 13 April 2006, an agreement was signed in Wajid formally ending the dispute and reconciling Hassan Mohamed Nur "Shattigudud" with a rival group headed by Mohammed Ibrahim "Habsade".

17. Years of fighting in and around Baidoa have generated a large number of freelance militias without allegiance to any faction leader. Before the opening session of the Transitional Federal Parliament on 26 February 2006, some two thousand armed men, most of them freelance militia, were persuaded to move to camps several kilometres outside the city limits. A few hundred of them served as security personnel for the opening session of Parliament.

18. The lack of food, water, shelter and other necessities at the militia encampment sites created disenchantment among the militiamen and many left the camps after a few weeks. Some returned to Baidoa, where they began to harass civilians. Others established checkpoints outside the city to extort money from passing vehicles. Freelance militiamen from the area have also tried to impede humanitarian shipments, including a World Food Programme (WFP) convoy on 10 April 2006. They have also clashed frequently with militiamen loyal to President Yusuf, who recently relocated to Baidoa from Jowhar.

19. Insufficient assistance to the militia encampments around Baidoa resulted, in part, from reluctance within the international community to feed and sustain active militiamen in the absence of a formal and coherent process of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration.

20. The continued activity of these militia poses a significant security challenge to Baidoa and the surrounding areas. Efforts by local leaders, including Mohammed Ibrahim Habsade, the main faction leader in Baidoa, to dismantle the checkpoints and restore order have had limited success. In the absence of a formal administrative structure in Baidoa, local leaders have been unable to restore security to the city. There is an urgent need for local leaders to agree on an appropriate administrative structure and to relocate the freelance and other factional militias to camps outside the city as part of a pre-disarmament exercise. Some international assistance has recently been provided for this purpose, and the United Nations plans to begin a cash-for-work programme to further support the demobilization of some of the encamped militiamen.

III. Activities of the United Nations and the international community

21. My Special Representative has maintained close contact with President Yusuf, Prime Minister Gedi and Speaker Sharif Hassan Sheikh Aden. He has encouraged them to continue to work together to advance the political process within the context of the transitional federal institutions and the Transitional Federal Charter. He has also worked closely with members of the international community, urging them to support the establishment of functioning State institutions.

22. During the period under review, a number of regional organizations have called for the partial or complete lifting of the United Nations arms embargo to facilitate the deployment of the proposed IGAD/AU peace support mission and the establishment of national security forces by the Transitional Federal Government. In his contacts with the representatives of the Government, IGAD and AU, my Special Representative highlighted the concerns of the Security Council on this issue. He drew their attention to Security Council resolutions and presidential statements on the arms embargo and underscored how seriously the Security Council regarded the matter. My Special Representative emphasized the need for the Government, IGAD and AU to follow the steps the Security Council had identified as prerequisites for a waiver of the arms embargo to enable the deployment of the proposed IGAD/AU peace support mission.

23. At the 11th IGAD Summit, held in Nairobi on 20 March 2006, the heads of State and Government reiterated their decision to deploy a peace support mission to Somalia. They expressed support for the statement of 15 March 2006 by the President of the Security Council (S/PRST/2006/11), in which he had welcomed the AU Summit decision of 25 January 2006 on Somalia, including the possible deployment of an IGAD/AU peace support mission to Somalia.

24. The IGAD leaders urged the Security Council, particularly the five permanent members, to lift the arms embargo on Somalia. The call followed earlier IGAD communiqués and declarations calling for the partial lifting of the embargo, not only for the proposed peace support mission, but also to enable the Transitional Federal Government to raise a national army and police force. This reflected a feeling among many IGAD member States that the arms embargo was obsolete.

25. Pursuant to decisions of the AU Summit, held in Khartoum in January 2006, and the 11th IGAD Summit, held in March 2006, the first consultative meeting of the Joint Panel of the Transitional Federal Government, IGAD and AU on the lifting of the United Nations arms embargo was held in Nairobi on 18 April 2006. The purpose of the consultative meeting was to agree on a common position regarding the arms embargo. The Government presented its draft national security and stabilization plan and expressed its intention to finalize the document before the end of May 2006 for submission to Parliament for approval. The Joint Panel agreed to follow a schedule for the endorsement of the plan by the transitional federal institutions and for the development of a detailed mission plan for the IGAD/AU peace support mission.

26. On 4 May 2006, foreign ministers of the Sana'a Forum countries (Ethiopia, the Sudan, the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia and Yemen), agreed to present an agenda to the Security Council for the lifting of the arms embargo. The

Forum also requested the League of Arab States and AU to fulfil their financial promises to Somalia and to establish a peace support mission in the country.

27. On 28 March 2006, the European Commission (EC) signed a memorandum of understanding in Brussels with President Yusuf and Prime Minister Gedi. EC pledged additional financial assistance for the Transitional Federal Government and urged the member States of the European Union to release 70 million euros (US$ 84 million) in addition to the 200 million euros granted for projects being implemented mainly through United Nations agencies.

28. The Secretary of State for International Development of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Mr. Hilary Benn, visited Baidoa on 17 May 2006 and held discussions with President Yusuf and Prime Minister Gedi. This was the first visit of a British minister to Somalia since the establishment of the Transitional Federal Government.

29. The Coordination and Monitoring Committee was established in Stockholm in October 2004 to channel and coordinate multilateral support for the peace process in Somalia. The international community and the Transitional Federal Government, with the facilitation of Sweden, have been working since late 2005 to refine the mandate of the Committee so that it can serve as an effective mechanism of support for the nascent Somali institutions. The revised mandate was signed on 2 May 2006 by the two Co-Chairmen, Prime Minister Gedi and my Special Representative. The first meeting of the Executive Bureau was held in Baidoa on 23 May 2006.

IV. Other developments in Somalia

30. "Somaliland" has remained relatively peaceful during the period under review and has intensified efforts to obtain international recognition. It is currently focusing largely on African countries as a follow-up to its December 2005 application for membership of AU. Opposition parties, however have objected to "President" Dahir Riyale Kahin's moves to extend the term of office of the *Guurti*, or Council of Elders which functions as the upper house of Parliament until 2010. Although the move was supported by the constitutional court and the *Guurti* itself, opposition parties expressed strong disapproval of the decision to extend the mandate, on the basis that it was unconstitutional, and they have called for an elected upper house. They accuse the administration of bypassing the lower house and taking a unilateral decision on the matter. "Somaliland", nevertheless, continues to make substantial progress in development and reconstruction, while most other areas of Somalia are only beginning to enter a post-conflict phase.

31. The dispute between "Somaliland" and the neighbouring "Puntland" over the Sool and Sanaag areas has continued. Although both sides have reduced their forces in recent months, tensions persist in the absence of a political solution. United Nations access to the disputed areas is sometimes difficult because both administrations insist that access to their respective regions cannot come from the other side. This has resulted, at times, in the harassment and intimidation of humanitarian workers, causing operational delays and increased expenses. There have also been clashes in Majehan, on the "Puntland"-controlled side of Sanaag, between its security forces and local militias. The fighting reportedly concerns a dispute over exploration rights in an area considered to have mineral deposits.

32. The "presidents" of "Somaliland" and "Puntland" were in Addis Ababa between 15 and 17 May 2006. While there was an expectation that Ethiopia might use the presence of the two leaders to broker some form of reconciliation, there was no confirmation that such mediation took place.

33. In spite of general stability in "Puntland", disputes within the administration have continued following a cabinet reshuffle in February 2006. On 27 February 2006, clashes between militias loyal to the ousted minister of planning and those belonging to the "Puntland" administration resulted in the killing of two persons. The dispute was, however, resolved and "President" Abde Muse Hersi appointed a new minister of planning on 26 April 2006.

Security

34. While security conditions in "Somaliland" and "Puntland" are relatively acceptable, the central and southern regions of Somalia remain insecure owing mainly to the absence of formal State structures and to intermittent disputes between and within clans.

35. Substantive information, including the latest report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia (S/2006/229), indicates that the United Nations arms embargo continues to be violated. Many of the beneficiaries include the factions that have participated in the recent hostilities in Mogadishu. Arms continue to reach Somalia from various external sources.

36. Insecurity in south and central Somalia includes political and resource-related disputes between and within clans or factional militia. The security situation in Kismayo, which has been relatively calm, is becoming fragile, mainly owing to the emergence of localized disputes along the lower Juba Valley and, to a lesser extent, to the spilling over of tensions from Mogadishu. This has begun to strain the Juba Valley Alliance, which, until recently, had been delicately balanced between the Haber Gedir factions of the Hawiye and those belonging to the Marehan, one of the major Darod sub-clans. Several assassinations and other attacks in Kismayo are believed to be linked to extremist elements. These elements are reported to have established training camps in southern Somalia. They are also known to be active in the central regions.

37. With the increase in drought-related humanitarian activities in central and southern Somalia, several security incidents have occurred involving humanitarian workers. On 5 March 2006, a humanitarian convoy was ambushed by heavily armed Galj'el militia near Belet Weyne, close to the Ethiopian border. One person was killed in the incident. On 21 March, gunfire exchanged between local militia and militia escorting a World Food Programme (WFP) food convoy in Middle Juba left one bystander dead. On 10 April, a WFP convoy was stopped outside Baidoa by freelance militiamen. The convoy was released after the intervention of Mohammed Ibrahim Habsade and his militia. However, when Habsade tried to dismantle the roadblock, a clash ensued, causing three deaths and injuries to nine others.

38. During the period under review, targeted attacks against United Nations personnel have also occurred. One international staff member of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) was taken hostage by a local businessman in Afmadow in Lower Juba on 1 March 2006, allegedly in lieu of fees he claimed were owed to

him by United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) dating back to 1997. The staff member was released 30 hours later following the intervention of the Transitional Federal Government. Three staff members of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) were abducted in Haradhere in the central region on 15 March, but they were released the same day after the intervention of clan elders and a district medical officer. On 16 April, a national staff member of UNICEF was shot and injured by militiamen in Bula Hawa in the Gedo region.

39. Sea piracy continues off the Somali coast, especially in the central coastal region. Harardheere and Hobyo appear to be the main staging points for the pirates. In spite of the active intervention by the Combined Joint Task Force, pirate attacks on shipping have continued, with at least three vessels seized during the reporting period.

40. The threat of piracy is a matter of increasing concern. Kenya has recently set up a Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre with the support of the International Maritime Organization to provide a rapid response to the growing number of pirate attacks in Somali waters. The Centre will serve Kenya, Seychelles, Somalia and Tanzania, with personnel responding to all forms of distress at sea, including attacks by pirates.

V. Humanitarian situation

41. The *Gu* (spring) rains over much of southern and north-west Somalia were good and generally well distributed, helping to replenish water catchments and supplies for both humans and livestock. Pasture is beginning to regenerate, livestock conditions are starting to improve and farmers are preparing land for cultivation. Pastoralists displaced as a result of the drought have been returning to their areas of origin.

42. The effects of Somalia's worst drought in a decade have eased with the rains. An early warning in February 2006 that some regions of southern Somalia faced a moderate risk of famine in the second half of the year has dissipated; it is too early, however, to determine the impact of the current *Gu* rains on food security. The situation for the country's 2.1 million people affected by the drought, including up to 400,000 internally displaced persons, remains alarming. Although most of the displaced are victims of drought and floods, recent casualties include those displaced by fighting, especially in Mogadishu.

43. The 2006 Consolidated Appeal for Somalia was revised and launched on 21 March 2006, requesting US$ 326,718,040 (up from US$ 174,116,815 in December 2005) and targeting 2.1 million people (up from around 1 million in December 2005).

44. Even if the *Gu* rains are satisfactory this year, humanitarian needs in southern Somalia remain extensive, requiring sustained long-term efforts. The drought has severely depleted livelihood assets, particularly for pastoralists. Prices of staple foods in southern Somalia are still much higher than normal for this time of year. Furthermore, the rains typically bring localized flooding, heightened risk of waterborne diseases and difficulties accessing areas of need. During his first visit to Somalia, on 1 May 2006, my Special Humanitarian Envoy for the Horn of Africa, Kjell Magne Bondevik, underscored the critical importance of meeting immediate

humanitarian needs while investing in longer-term rehabilitation to pave the way for development.

45. The Special Envoy also stressed the paramount importance of access and security for the delivery of humanitarian assistance, since the lack of sustained access remains an overriding constraint for humanitarian response. Factors contributing to this are the continuing lack of infrastructure; insecurity; the absence of partners and poor operational capacity; continued acts of piracy along the coast; delayed funding from donors; and more recently, localized flooding. Insecurity, in particular, has inhibited the operational environment during the reporting period.

46. Against this backdrop, advocacy for access and protection has been initiated. On 17 February 2006, the Humanitarian Coordinator for Somalia sent an open letter to all Somali leaders urging them to help create an environment conducive to the free and safe passage of humanitarian assistance. Basic humanitarian principles on access and protection continue to be disseminated among local authorities to garner grass-roots support for unhindered humanitarian space and operations.

47. Smuggling of Ethiopian migrants and Somalis from ports in "Puntland" to Yemen continues to pose a serious humanitarian concern requiring urgent international and local responses. In March and April 2006, about 1,823 Somalis and 1,870 Ethiopians were reported to have arrived in Yemen on 31 ships, although a lesser number actually registered with UNHCR. Hundreds have died attempting that journey this year. A significant number of others, particularly young women, have become the targets of traffickers.

48. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the United Nations agencies, including UNHCR, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the International Organization for Migration, have been working to facilitate the return of willing Ethiopians from Somalia under an assisted voluntary return programme. The agencies are also working with local and regional authorities to find durable solutions to this problem. The issue of Ethiopian and Somali migrants and human trafficking must be addressed jointly by aid partners and authorities from Ethiopia, Somalia and Yemen.

49. Seventeen thousand people have been displaced as a result of the recent fighting in Mogadishu. Initially, most of these movements were within the city. As the fighting intensified, however, people started to leave Mogadishu for other locations, including Afgoye, Balad, Elasha, Bulu Hawa, Jowar and Merka. Even before the fighting started, an estimated 250,000 internally displaced persons resided in Mogadishu. Between 10,000 to 20,000 internally displaced persons have left the capital. Most of the displaced are children, women, the elderly and the disabled. They are expected to return when the fighting ends. If the fighting persists, it could have serious consequences for the humanitarian situation in southern Somalia, including the main humanitarian supply pipeline from the port of El Ma'an.

50. More than 2,500 internally displaced persons and returnees were left homeless at Boqolka Buush settlement on 9 May 2006 when a fire gutted their settlement in Bossasso. Boqolka Buush is the largest settlement for internally displaced persons in "Puntland". Virtually all the huts were destroyed by the fire. This was just one of several fires in settlements for internally displaced persons in recent months.

51. The United Nations Special Adviser on Internal Displacement, Mr. Dennis McNamara, visited Somalia from 22 to 26 May 2006 and met with the Transitional Federal Government and with the administrations of "Somaliland" and "Puntland". He appealed to local authorities to allow more international humanitarian agencies to work among internally displaced persons and vulnerable groups. Calling attention to the plight of people smuggled out of Somalia, Mr. McNamara called for the prosecution of traffickers and organizers of the trade.

52. UNHCR and local and international partners have initiated a project to track population movement, which provides data needed to develop contingency plans and strengthen prevention against further population displacement. The population movement information database in the Nairobi office of UNHCR continues to analyse cross-border movements induced by drought.

53. Drought in February and March 2006 increased population movement, as pastoralists and their livestock moved towards riverine areas and urban centres in search of water, pasture and humanitarian assistance. Competition for water and green pasture caused an increase in resource-based conflicts. During March 2006, the United Nations tracked the movement of some 300,000 people from areas affected by drought. With the onset of the *Gu* rains, many have started to return to their areas of origin in the traditional pastoral hinterlands. Protection needs are greatest among communities of internally displaced persons that have been burdened by multiple displacements.

VI. Human rights and protection

54. The human rights situation in Somalia continues to be of great concern, exacerbated by the lack of functioning State institutions, the absence of the rule of law and clan and faction-based conflict that has been going on for more than 15 years. As a result, perpetrators are assured of impunity. Gender-based violence is endemic, particularly among internally displaced persons. The rights of minority groups, especially "Bantus" remain unprotected.

55. There is no functional administration of the justice system in Somalia. Elders dispense justice through the practice of compensation. In Mogadishu, the Shariah Courts have established their own private detention centres. Human rights defenders and defence lawyers in the capital cannot access these detention centres or provide legal assistance to the detainees. Without a protection mechanism for human rights defenders in much of the country, Somali human rights organizations continue to operate in a context of insecurity and fear.

56. The recent fighting between ARPCT and the Shariah Courts in Mogadishu has resulted in heavy civilian casualties, an increase in the number of internally displaced persons who remain without assistance and protection, and movement of people within the capital because the most vulnerable are unable to escape. The two sides have been recruiting children from the streets and schools to join their militia groups. A rise in civilian kidnappings has also been reported in Mogadishu. Children and women, as well as prominent businessmen, are reported to be the prime targets for ransom.

57. Access to information is the main challenge faced by United Nations agencies as they try to promote a strategy to protect human rights. Efforts are under way to

set up a network for protection and human rights monitoring, which will involve United Nations agencies and Somali human rights groups. Once established, the network would monitor and report systematically on human rights abuses and help to identify protection and human rights responses, including advocacy.

58. The High Commissioner for Human Rights, Ms. Louise Arbour, visited Nairobi and met with my Special Representative in April 2006. She also met with the staff of United Nations agencies, members of the international community and human rights organizations to exchange views on the human rights challenges in Somalia and plan strategies for intervention.

VII. Operational activities to promote peace

A. Rule of law and governance

59. In February 2006, the United Nations and donors provided support for the first session of Parliament in Baidoa. Support for the ongoing session includes the rehabilitation of the Parliament's facilities, transportation for members of Parliament to Baidoa, and the rehabilitation and refurbishment of the offices of President Yusuf and the Speaker. The United Nations has also supported the payment of stipends to members of Parliament through the UNDP Somalia Emergency Budgetary Support Project.

60. The United Nations Political Office for Somalia organized a seminar in Baidoa from 3 to 8 May 2006, on federalism and constitutional affairs to help members of Parliament prepare for the drafting of a new federal constitution. This capacity-building project was implemented under the auspices of the United Nations Trust Fund for Peacebuilding in Somalia. The aim was to stimulate dialogue on the Transitional Federal Charter and enhance the legislative and policymaking capacity of Parliament. More than 180 members of Parliament (out of 275) attended the seminar.

61. A five-member task force of the Transitional Federal Government participated in a 20-day training programme in February 2006 at the Kenya Institute of Administration in Nairobi. The programme produced a strategic workplan for the establishment of a civil service for ratification by the Transitional Federal Parliament. The plan would pave the way for the creation of a civil service commission. Training covered such areas as management principles, public policy formulation, recruitment and selection, industrial relations and labour laws, performance appraisal and public finance management. The training was supported by the Government of Norway through the New Beginnings Project of UNDP.

62. A district-based peacebuilding and reconciliation project supported by the Government of Italy and coordinated by UNDP was launched in April 2006. The aim of the project is to enable communities to select their local administrations, initiate district-based reconciliation and establish district development councils throughout the country, starting with the Bay region in central Somalia.

63. The project brings together clan elders, traditional leaders and civil society groups to work for the re-establishment of representative local administrations, in keeping with the Transitional Federal Charter. These groups from each region will

facilitate the dialogue and action needed to disseminate the outcome of the 2004 Somali National Reconciliation Conference.

64. The first police officers from "Puntland" and southern Somalia to be trained together in some 15 years graduated from the recently established Armo Police Academy in "Puntland" in April 2006. The 151 cadets, of whom 19 are female, joined the Academy on 1 December 2005 and are to be deployed nationwide.

65. The UNDP rule of law and security (ROLS) programme has been supporting the creation of a special protection unit for the "Puntland" police force. The rehabilitation of premises for the unit in Garowe was completed in the first quarter of 2006, and 120 recruits, including 10 women, have been selected.

66. A seminar on the re-establishment of the Supreme Court in Somalia was held in Nairobi on 21-22 February 2006. It provided a forum for prospective members of the Supreme Court to discuss matters related to the re-establishment of the Supreme Court and its subordinate courts. The seminar was preceded by six days of informal discussions attended by six prospective members of the Supreme Court, the President of the Supreme Court, the Solicitor-General of the Transitional Federal Government and staff of the UNDP/ROLS programme.

B. Joint needs assessment

67. During the period under review, the Somali joint needs assessment made significant progress towards finalizing its assessments and analysis. In addition to the in-country cluster assessment missions, a field assessment based on a questionnaire was completed in early May 2006. The exercise was able to reach many remote and inaccessible places in Somalia, including areas that the international community had not visited for many years. The questionnaire results will be analysed and consolidated for integration into the draft cluster reports (see S/2006/122, para. 46).

68. In an effort to broaden Somali participation in the joint needs assessment process, a consultative planning workshop was held in Nairobi on 1 April 2006 with key civil society stakeholders from Mogadishu. This was followed by workshops for civil society stakeholders in Beletweyne, Garowe and Mogadishu in April and May. A two-day joint needs assessment consultation and validation workshop was held on 24 and 30 May in Mogadishu, organized by civil society organizations and local assessment experts for over 200 Mogadishu stakeholders. Participation in the workshop included professionals, women and youth groups, traditional and religious leaders, business groups and regional administrations, including the "mayors" from the 16 Mogadishu districts, the Mogadishu "governor" and representatives of internally displaced persons. The remaining cluster validation workshops in the field will take place in June 2006.

69. An in-country media campaign is under way to inform the public by radio of the joint needs assessment. The goal is to ensure that the general public is aware of the assessment process and to gain broad Somali buy-in and ownership of it. In addition, the assessment team visited Baidoa in late May 2006 with Al Arabiya Television and the British Broadcasting Corporation to highlight the recovery, reconstruction and development needs of Somalia and to generate constructive interest in the future of the country. To deepen Somali ownership of the assessment

process, the Transitional Federal Parliament was briefed on the process on 25 May 2006 by UNDP and the World Bank. Discussions are continuing on the best way to ensure that members of Parliament remain engaged. The final report of the Somali reconstruction and development programme is expected to be completed by July 2006.

C. Poverty reduction and sustainable livelihoods

70. The United Nations poverty reduction and sustainable livelihoods programme has continued to support the Berbera Port Training Centre and the "Puntland" Institute for Development of Administration and Management. The two institutes have a total of 300 fee-paying students and help meet the need for well-trained employees for the public and private sectors.

71. The employment-intensive programme of the International Labour Organization (ILO) for peace in Mogadishu and in south and central Somalia focuses on emergency and short- to medium-term strategies to create jobs, promote social dialogue, revive and stabilize local economies, rehabilitate and build infrastructure, and deliver essential services. The ILO programme in "Somaliland" and "Puntland" is responsive to the peaceful transition from relief to development that has been taking place in these areas for some years. In addition to job creation, ILO is boosting employment through the development of small and medium enterprises.

D. Health

72. A mass polio vaccination campaign was conducted through National Immunization Days in the first half of 2006. Although the number of cases dropped considerably in Mogadishu in 2006, new cases have been reported in other regions and polio could spread to neighbouring countries in the Horn of Africa. Additional campaigns, including intensified social mobilization and cross-border activities, are planned throughout 2006.

73. Measles and neonatal tetanus vaccination campaigns are in progress in central and southern Somalia as part of ongoing activities to reduce infant, child and maternal mortality. Over 2.5 million children aged from nine months to 15 years, will be vaccinated against measles by the end of June 2006. In the Lower Shabelle region of southern Somalia, the second round of the campaign, targeting 250,000 women of childbearing age, has been completed.

74. Considerable progress has been made in malaria control with over 400 health staff trained in new treatment guidelines. Artemisine combination therapy has been introduced at all levels of the health system.

75. In March 2006, Ms. Anna Cataldi, the United Nations Messenger of Peace, visited the Borama and Hargesia tuberculosis hospitals and helped raise funds for the programme.

76. The World Health Organization (WHO), in coordination with other agencies, has been playing a lead role in providing health care support to an estimated 2.1 million people affected by drought. WHO is supporting health authorities to assess

and monitor risks, support health coordination and provide technical expertise for outbreak control and outreach services.

E. HIV/AIDS

77. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 60/224 of 23 December 2005, the United Nations organized a meeting on the acceleration of universal access to HIV/AIDS treatment, from 21 to 24 February 2006 in Bossasso. The participants from "Puntland", "Somaliland" and other parts of Somalia discussed the findings of a consultative study on the status of HIV treatment in these regions. A workplan to accelerate access to integrated prevention, treatment, care and support services is now being developed.

78. The South Central AIDS Commission was launched on 14 March at an extraordinary session of the Transitional Federal Parliament, held in Baidoa. "Puntland" and "Somaliland" established AIDS commissions late in 2005.

F. Water and environmental sanitation

79. Central and southern Somalia were severely affected by drought in the first quarter of 2006. United Nations agencies implemented projects to clean and deepen boreholes and shallow wells and to supply water by trucks to communities in need. Chlorination of water sources and hygiene and sanitation campaigns have helped to prevent outbreaks of waterborne diseases. Work has begun to improve the water supply for Baidoa as the temporary seat of the transitional federal institutions.

G. Education

80. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization supported the formulation of the primary teacher education curriculum for "Puntland" and continues to assist in the provision of textbooks and teaching guides for grades 7 and 8 in the rest of the country. The ongoing scholarship initiative sponsored by EC currently supports 33 Somali students studying in Kenyan universities. The students will return to Somalia after their studies to contribute to the local recovery process.

81. The partnership between UNDP, the African Virtual University (AVU), the African Development Bank and Somali tertiary institutions, supports AVU short courses in journalism, information technology and business at six participating institutions. Degree-level courses in teacher education and journalism are also under way at Amoud University, University of Hargeisa and the East Africa University.

82. An online distance mode curriculum for teacher education is ready and multiple teaching formats including CD-ROM have been developed. AVU personnel have completed the initial on-ground technical assessments at the three universities mentioned above and Somali institutions are in the process of adopting the curriculum.

H. Youth development and participation

83. UNICEF has supported the development of a youth website, Hellosomaliyouth.net. Six zonal youth webmasters have received basic web management training and are now uploading news articles and moderating online discussion forums on topical youth issues. The website will be launched later in the year.

84. UNICEF and the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) are implementing training for youth in leadership, organizational development and youth peer education projects. Some 1,200 young people were trained in the last quarter. Training in good local governance was also provided for some 225 youth in "Somaliland".

I. Observations

85. There have been significant gains in Somalia's political process, including the convening of Parliament and the endorsement of Baidoa as the interim seat of the transitional federal institutions. I commend the leadership of these institutions for forging ahead with commitment and courage. These gains, however, which were achieved so painstakingly, may now be undermined by the fighting in Mogadishu and continuing insecurity in Baidoa.

86. The first priority must be an enduring ceasefire in Mogadishu and serious steps to consolidate peace. The influence of internal and external actors will be required to bring both sides back from the brink and help them to resolve their differences and competing interests. While addressing the problems of Mogadishu, it is imperative that the parties find a modus operandi that also addresses any terrorist threat in the capital. The continued violations of the United Nations arms embargo is contributing to the ongoing violence and exacerbates security conditions in Somalia, in particular in Mogadishu.

87. The second priority must be to strengthen the transitional federal institutions and build a bridge between Mogadishu and Baidoa. The international community cannot force peace on the belligerents, but it can help to sort out differences within the Transitional Federal Government and to bring all its members together in support of the political process in Baidoa.

88. My Special Representative, François Lonseny Fall, is consulting with all Somali leaders as well as with IGAD, AU, the League of Arab States and representatives of interested Governments. He is making every effort to stop the fighting and convince the Somali leaders to pursue dialogue, reconciliation and stable governance in accordance with the Transitional Federal Charter. The United Nations stands ready to provide assistance and support within such a framework.

89. Effective transitional federal institutions will enable Somalia to strengthen its internal security and deal with such threats as terrorism. In this regard, it is important to strengthen the National Security and Stabilization Plan. Included in the framework of the Plan is the need to achieve a comprehensive, workable and verifiable ceasefire and a programme of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration best suited to the Somali environment. With the assistance of external

actors, it is hoped that this Plan will become more effective and responsive to the requirements of sustainable security and law enforcement.

90. Now that all the transitional federal institutions, including the Transitional Federal Government, the Transitional Federal Parliament, and the Judiciary are located in Baidoa, there is an urgent need to assist in the establishment of a district administration in Baidoa to provide basic services and enforce public security. At the same time, efforts must be made to encourage and support the encampment and disarmament of the freelance militias now present in and around the city.

91. I commend the United Nations programmes and agencies for their continued delivery of humanitarian assistance to Somalia against the backdrop of mounting challenges relating especially to access. Every effort must be made by the Transitional Federal Government and local authorities to ensure unhindered humanitarian access to all vulnerable groups, particularly those affected by the current humanitarian crisis, as well as to ensure the protection of humanitarian workers. In this regard, the need for concerted support and assistance towards improved security cannot be overestimated.

92. There is also need for greater international commitment and coordinated support to alleviate the plight of Somalis and improve the humanitarian situation in Somalia. If the dire effects of the humanitarian crisis are to be mitigated, the international community and especially the major multilateral and bilateral partners must respond generously to the Revised 2006 Somalia Consolidated Appeals Process and meet their pledges in timely fashion. I call on donors to provide more flexible funding and to invest in the operational capacity of non-governmental organizations, taking into account the security costs involved in establishing a presence inside Somalia.

93. Finally, I wish to reaffirm my deep appreciation to my Special Representative for Somalia for his leadership and relentless efforts to foster inclusive dialogue and reconciliation among the leaders of the transitional federal institutions and to end the fighting in Mogadishu. I call upon all Somali parties and Member States to continue to lend to him their fullest support and cooperation in the pursuit of this goal.